Sexual Ethics in Islam and in the Western World

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Table of Contents:

Chapter 1

Islam and Traditional Sexual Ethics

For Muslims, the institution of marriage based on mutuality of natural interest and cordiality between spouses represents a sublime manifestation of the Divine Will and Purpose. This is discernible in the Quranic verse cited below:

And one of His signs is that He created mates for you, that you may find rest in them, and He envisaged between you love and compassion ... (Quran, 30:21)

According to Islamic tradition *(sunnah),* marriage has been deemed to be an essential requirement. Celibacy has been regarded as a malevolent condition fraught with evils.

The Islamic approach concerning marriage and morals differs from what is known about some of the traditional moralizations of a negative kind. Surprisingly enough, certain traditional moralists regarded sexuality as something basically wicked. They viewed sexual intercourse; even with ones legal spouse, as impure, evil, undesirable, destructive, and as if it were characteristic of the guilty and fallen.

Still more surprising is the generalized view harboured in the West that the traditional world commonly believed in the superstition that ascribed an evil connotation to everything pertaining to sex. The famous Western philosopher, Bertrand Russell, is no exception in this regard. In his book: *Marriage and Morals,* he generalizes that:

" ... anti-sexual elements, however, existed side by side with the others from a very early time, and in the end, where ever Christianity and Buddhism prevailed, these elements won a complete victory over their opposites. Westermarck gives many instances of what he calls 'the curious notion that there is something impure and sinful in marriage, as *in sexual relations generally.*

In the most diverse parts of the world, quite remote from any Christian or Buddhist influence, there have been orders of priests and priestesses vowed to celibacy. Among the Jews the sect of the Essenes considered all sexual intercourse impure. This view seems to have gained ground in antiquity .

... There was indeed a generalized tendency towards ascetism in the Roman empire. Epicureanism nearly died out and stoicism replaced it among cultivated Greeks and Romans . ... The neo-Platonists were almost as ascetic as the Christians. From Persia the doctrine that matter is evil spread to the West, and brought with it the belief that all sexual intercourse is impure. This is, though not in an extreme form, the view of the Church ..." [1]

Negative sexual attitudes continued through the centuries to affect masses of credulous people, in an adverse and also frightening manner of repugnance towards sex. The high incidence of psychosomatic disorders and spiritual ailments is largely and uniquely attributed by some psychoanalysts to a widespread prevalence of deeply ingrained negative sexuality.

What could have been the causative factors in the misconceptions about sexuality? What could be the reasons for men to deny themselves the natural satisfaction and the psychosomatic well being associated with healthy and desirable sex? Why should people lead their lives, so as to virtually condemn an essentially wholesome part of their lives? These are some of the complex questions for which thinking men have yet to provide meaningful and convincing answers. Yet, we all know that there could be many different reasons for, and causes of, aversion to human sexuality.

Apparently, the reasons include prejudicial thinking about sexual desire and intercourse. The prejudice was carried to the extreme among the Christians, in organizing their churches and the clergy.

The celibacy of Jesus Christ inspired them to the effect that married status for saints and preachers was considered tantamount to pollution of their chastity and piety. Accordingly, Popes are always chosen from among unmarried priests. In fact, all the members of the Catholic clergy are bound by their oaths of celibacy towards remaining virtuous.

Bertrand Russell says:

"Two or three beautiful descriptions of this institution (marriage) have been culled out of the immense mass of the patristic writings; but in general, it would be difficult to conceive anything more coarse or repulsive than the manner in which they regarded it . ... The object of the ascetic was to attract men to a life of virginity, and as a necessary consequence, marriage was treated as an inferior state . ... To 'cut down by the axe of Virginity the wood of Marriage' was in the energetic language of St. Jerome, the end of the saint" [2]

Church approves marriage for purpose of human procreation. The need for propagation of human species is not construed as something adequate to lift the stigma of impurity from any sexual act. Another reason for conceding marriage is to eliminate fornication between men and women. Again to quote Bertrand Russell:

"Christianity, and more particularly St. Paul, introduced an entirely novel view of marriage that it existed not primarily for the procreation of children, but to prevent the sin of fornication" [3]

The Catholic Church regards marriage as sacrosanct and binding until death intervenes. Accordingly, dissolution of marriage, or divorce, is not permitted. The prohibition of annulment of marriage or divorce may have something to do with a possible desire to atone for the original sin, resulting in the expulsion of Adam and Eve in an unmarried state.

Irrational attitudes towards women prevailed among some of the ancient peoples. These included a notion that a woman was not a complete human being; for, her situation as a creature might well lie somewhere between a human being and an animal. Also, she was devoid of an articulate spirit, so that she could never make it to Heaven! Similar other superstitions were rampant in the past.

Fortunately, however, the aforementioned beliefs and notions were not universally carried to the extreme. Any natural limits of women, as identified and evaluated in the past, were not encroached upon. Any impact of traditional ways of thinking did not go beyond cultivation of

a sense of pride by men and inculcation of a sense of inferiority among women through generations.

Apparently, the belief in the inherent wickedness of sexual desire and intercourse made men and women absolutely and equally distressed in spiritual terms. Moreover, it caused a rather demoralizing conflict between the natural instinct's urge and the religious or sectarian belief about wickedness of carnal desire and sexual intercourse.

Spiritual ailments and unhappiness arising from the aforementioned conflict included disharmony between genuine natural desires and socially induced aversion towards their fulfillment. The problem assumed extraordinary proportions, in as much as it became the subject of intensive investigations by psychologists and psychoanalysts.

In the above context, the revolutionary logic of Islam can be of extraordinary interest. Islam gives no slightest indication to the effect that sexual desire is evil in itself, or that it is necessarily fraught with evil consequences. On the contrary, the Islamic endeavour in this regard is aimed at regulating human sexuality in a most humane manner.

In the perspective of Islam, human sexual relations are limited only by the genuine interests of the present society, or the posterity. In this connection, the Islamic approach follows well known guidelines, leading neither to any sense of sexual deprivation and frustration, nor to any repressed or inhibited sexual desire. It is a pity that scholars, like Bertrand Russell, who has evaluated the Christian and Buddhist morals, have refrained from specifically commenting on Islamic ethics.

In his book: *Marriage and Morals,* Bertrand Russell mentions in passing about Islam. For example, he says:

"Great religious leaders, with the exception of Mohammad and Confucius, if he can be called religious - have in general been very indifferent to social and political considerations, and have sought rather to perfect the soul by meditation, discipline and self-denial." [4]

Nonetheless, it is true that from the Islamic point of view sexual desire is not only compatible with human intellectuality or spirituality, but is evidenced as part of the nature and temperament of the prophets. According to one tradition *(hadith),* love and affection for women were characteristic of the moral conduct of the prophets. (مِنْ أَخلاقِ الأَنبياء حُبُّ النِّساء)

There are several other traditions and narrations indicating prophetic regard for women. According to some, the Prophet of Islam and the pious Imams too have all explicitly demonstrated their love and regard for their wives and the womenfolk. At the same time, they have strongly disapproved of any human inclination towards celibacy or monasticism.

One of the companions of the Holy Prophet, Osman bin Madaoon, devoted himself to Allah's worship to such an extent that he kept fast practically everyday, as well as regular nightly vigils in prayers. His wife brought the matter to the attention of the Prophet, who reacted with visible annoyance and proceeded at once to where his companion was and said:

"O Othman! Know that Allah has not deputed me to encourage any monastic life. My Shariah laws are meant for enhancing and facilitating human accomplishment of their natural lives. Personally, I offer my prayers, keep fast and maintain my conjugal relations. Accordingly, to

follow me in Islam means conforming to the traditions laid down by me, which include the requirement that men and women should marry and live together harmoniously"

The Islamic position as explained above makes it clear that human sexuality in itself neither represents any inborn wickedness, nor it invariably signifies evil consequences. Furthermore, it clarifies that wickedness has been traditionally ascribed to human sexuality in the process of evolving religious morality in the Western world. Now, the Western world has taken a 180-degree turn in reversing its extreme traditional morals.

At present, the Western world believes in respecting and freeing sexual desires and involvements through lifting of traditional moral restraints. In fact, many Westerners now favour sexual permissiveness. They contend that whatever morality has been inherited by them carries no more than a religious connotation. They claim that today's new morals are based on not only philosophical, but scientific reasons.

Unfortunately, the negative sexuality traditionally and recently evolved in the West has penetrated the moral fabric of our society, too.

This is despite all the erstwhile difficulty of international communication. Now with the improved means of communication and regular international contacts, the modernistic Western speculations are virtually flooding our society, as will be explained later on herein.

Notes:

1- Bertrand Russell: *Marriage and Morals,* George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, Paperbacks Ed. 1976, p.p. 31-32

2- *Ibid*. p. 39-40

3- *Ibid.* p. 35

4- ?

Chapter 2

Sexual Ethics as Conceived by Modern Thinkers

Sexual morals constitute an integral part of behavioural ethics applicable to human beings. Included in sexual ethics are some of the various social norms, personal habits and behavioural patterns, which are associated directly with the sexual instinct. Some aspects of the sexual ethics and practices are specified below:

Female modesty, male sense of honour concerning female members of a household, female chastity, a wife's faithfulness to her husband; female inclination to cover her private parts, or her aversion to exposing any bodily nakedness in public; prohibition of adultery, interdiction of any visual or physical intimacy with women other than one's legal wife or wives; prohibition of incest, or marriage between persons too closely related; avoidance of sexual intercourse with menstruating women; debarring pornography or obscenity; and treating celibacy as either too saintly or undesirable.

Sexual instinct is by its very nature quite extraordinary. Also, it is powerful in its manifestation. Accordingly, sexual morals are part of the most important of all ethics.

In his book entitled: *Our Oriental Heritage, Will* Durant highlighted the fact that marrying and settling down was always considered to be one of the very important moral duties of human beings. He said that the natural human capability for procreation involved difficulties, not only at the time of marriage, but before and after that, as well.

The difficulties could be aggravated by the intensity and vehemence A the sexual instinct, as well as its aversion to moral and legal constraints. Further, it might even lead to deviation from its natural course. All these and more, as mentioned by Will Durant, meant extreme confusion and organisational disorders, if and when a society could not provide necessary and effective safeguards.

Any scientific and philosophical discussion of sexual morals need first consider their origins and evolution. For instance, it is necessary to know how modesty and chastity of women have come to be safeguarded. The fact that men traditionally protect their women, as part of their own sense of honour, could be due to identifiable or specific reasons.

The male aptitude for possessiveness and protection of women may not necessarily be attributed to any inborn jealousy of men. For, human jealousy has universally been considered a negative emotion. Has an exception been made in favour of jealousy so as to safeguard husband- wife relationship? If so, why? lf there are other reasons for men protecting the honour of their women, as if it were a question of their own honour, how can these be explained?

Likewise, the desires and social norms favouring clothing or covering of female body, curbing sexual promiscuity, prohibiting marriage between persons too closely related and similar other moral and legal restraints need be explained. Their examination can be in terms of whether or not they have their roots in the human nature, physiological and psychological.

Then, one may as well ask as to whether or not sexual morals are linked to the natural requirements of gregarious living Or, is it part of their inborn tendencies, feelings and concerns towards an appropriate human survival in the natural process. Or, is there any possibility that historical causes, other than natural, have gradually affected and influenced human conscientiousness and behaviour?

If the source of human morality has been entirely rooted in nature, it is hard to explain how not only the ancient savages, but today's isolated primitive tribes, living in the manner of their ancestors, were and are quite unlike the civilized people.

The origins and raison d'etre of sexual morality may be diverse. So can be the historical conditions of social evolution, with reference to human sexual ethics in particular. Nevertheless, the question relevant to us now is as to whether or not the traditional morals are valid in the modern conditions towards achieving overall human progress.

Specifically, we must ask ourselves whether or not we must now safeguard the traditional sexual ethics or replace them by instituting new morals.

Will Durant does not trace human sexual morality to any origins in the mother nature. He attributes moral evolution to reasons arising from historical experience, even some occasionally unhappy or cruel happenings in the past. He favours retaining the substance of traditional morals, while allowing continued evolution of the forms, in order to selectively practise the best without shortcomings.

Referring to morals concerning female virginity, modesty and bashfulness, Will Durant observes to the effect that traditional values and customs evidence a natural process of moral selection, involving trials and errors through centuries. According to him, virginity and modesty are relative qualities linked with conditions of marriage and traceable to even a past situation requiring purchase of, or bargaining for, wives.

Will Durant recognizes that the moral and social requirements of female chastity and modesty are of basic importance to any society, even if these qualities are sometimes capable of giving rise to psychosomatic and nervous disorders. Moreover, the relevant social regulations are essential for promoting a harmonious continuity in sexual relations in the context of marriage and family living.

Freud and his followers subscribed to a different view of sexual morals. They sought to dispense with the traditional sexual morality, or to replace them with something altogether new. In the opinion of Freud and his followers, morals were based on limitations and prohibitions concerning human sexuality. They claimed that the limitations and prohibitions caused many human afflictions and gave rise to emotional disturbances, including subconscious fears and obsessions.

Basically similar arguments have been put forward by Bertrand Russell. He defends in his own way the position that nothing should be regarded as taboo. His views concerning marriage and morals are independent of any moral considerations, such as those of chastity, rectitude, modesty, any male sense of honour encompassing the female (which he suggests is actually jealousy) and similar others.

The proposed liberation of human sexuality from traditional moral restraints is tantamount to claiming that nothing ugly, bad or disgraceful can come out of it. The impression conveyed is one of relying on nothing but the human intellect and its rationalizations. The proposal concedes no more restraint on sex than any natural limitation of food intake!

Elsewhere, Bertrand Russell tried to answer a question as to whether or not he had any advice to give those who wanted to follow a correct and sensible path in matters of sex. His reply was to the effect that, after all, one should examine the question of sexual morality in the same analytical manner as in the case of any other problem. If, as a result of adequate examination, it was found that others would come to no harm from one's pursuing a certain manner of sexual conduct, we would have no reasons to condemn any such individual rationalization and practice.

Bertrand Russell replied in the negative to a second question as to whether or not, in his - opinion, any violation of female chastity could be viewed as an exception to his contention that actions causing no harm or loss to others should not be condemned. He explained that loss of virginity could be due to an act between two individuals. However, If it was construed as an act of violation of the chastity of a virgin, there should be evidence to the same effect before it could be condemned as rape.

For the time being, we may refrain from a detailed examination of the question as to whether or not human traits like modesty, or sexual chastity, are rooted in the Mother Nature. For, the question is very broad in scope. One can hardly give a completely scientific answer. However, whatever has been indicated thereon, so far, can neither be assumptive, nor approximate. For., it is recognized that those who base their opinions on assumptions often lack consensus:

For instance, human inclinations like sexual modesty are viewed differently by Freud, Will Durant and Bertrand Russell. The nature and content of their difference need not be detailed herein. Suffice it to mention that these writers seem to base their views on the assumption that human qualities like female modesty are not inborn or in any way specific to human nature. If so, their understanding of human characteristics shows what appears to be disinclination to seek a correct justification, or a microscopic approach.

Be that as it may, we can indeed make two assumptions regarding sex habits and inclinations. Firstly, we may assume that sex-oriented behavioural qualities have no connection whatever with the innate nature of human beings. Secondly, we may suppose that the "habits" are inculcated as part of other human practices and norms, under some kind of a social contract, designed to harmonize individual and social interests, as well as towards assuring peace and well being of mankind.

Let us now ask ourselves as to whether or not logic and reasoning demand intrinsic values and safeguards for assuring complete psychological harmony and maximizing human well being and peace. We may further ask ourselves as to whether or not any elimination of moral and social restraints and limits will be conducive towards achieving complete psychosomatic harmony of individuals and enhancing social welfare.

Then, we may well realize that logic and reasoning deem it advisable for us to oppose every customary practice and superstitious habit, which implicitly treats human sexuality as unclean and pernicious. At the same time, we are likely to consider it necessary that we should refrain

from promoting any unrestrained sexual freedom which causes widespread excesses, transgressions and agonies.

The supporters of the proposed new sexual liberty base their arguments on three premises,

(1) Freedom should be ensured for every individual, as it does not interfere with that of others;

(2) All inborn sexual desires and aptitudes should be freely nurtured and brought to fulfilment without any inhibition or restraint, since their curbing or frustration leads to disorders of the ego; and

(3) Any natural desire subsides when it is fulfilled, and it becomes insistent and excessive when it is subjected to any negative moral restraint or ill conceived prohibition.

The sexual liberationists argue that emotional instability arises from discriminating among the natural instincts and desires, so that only part of these are satisfied while the others remain frustrated. So, they say, equal nurturing and development of all human inclinations is necessary for personal and societal well being.

Furthermore, they suggest that, for avoiding constant preoccupation with sex, the only correct way is to lift all moral restraints and social prohibitions. They claim that liberation of the natural process of sexual fulfilment will also preempt mischief, malice and vengeance characteristic of a situation involving moral restrictions.

The foregoing arguments constitute the basis on which the new sexual morality is proposed. God-willing, we should be able to render these arguments untenable, through an adequate investigation and a thorough evaluation of the three basic premises mentioned above.

Chapter 3

Proposed New Sexual Freedom

A critical analysis of the basic principles of the proposed new sexual freedom has been indicated in the preceding chapter. In this chapter, we concentrate on examination of the salient features of the proposed new sexual liberation, specially on its reformatory content in relation to conventional morality. This will be conducive to a detailed analysis, which is not likely to be thorough otherwise.

That there are people W11 are already convinced about the reformatory content of the proposed new sexual conduct is to be recognised. At the same time, it is worthwhile - even necessary - that social problems, including those of sexual morality, are discussed from various angles. For, the question of sexual ethics has received the attention of famous thinkers of our age. Above all, it is notable that the proposed new, approach to human sexuality has tended to be readily accepted by young people, without evidencing any skepticism. Views of well - known personalities of our modern times are apparently taken to be infallible.

In our considered opinion, it is necessary that the esteemed readers are made aware of all the implications of even any rudimentary assimilation on the part of our impressionable young people of the novel ideas from the West, including some with innocuous labels, such as *freedom*, and *equality*. This is because we must know in which direction we are applying our minds, to what purpose and towards what end. If whatever we think and do is believed to be correct without verification, does it necessarily enable mankind to continue progressing?

Or else, does the Western intellectual and cultural penetration of our society represent too ill - informed and too illconceived a propaganda strategy that, if allowed to spread, is bound to lead mankind towards self -destruction?

The above questions are intended to be discussed herein, in a necessarily brief manner. A more elaborate discussion of the relevant issues will be found in the author's book: *The Rights of Women in Islam*. [1]

With regard to the modernistic reform of the traditional sexual morals, the speculative reformers claim that the very basis of the latter no longer exists, or is in the process of vanishing. Since the reasons, the causative factors and the original conditions have changed, or are changing, they say that we have no longer any justification to continue practising the old morality, the severity of which has occasionally been evidenced.

Furthermore, they point out that, aside from the changed or changing conditions, there have been in the historical past events involving the old morality in an ignorant and cruel manner. They believe that the past experiences were inconsistent with the concepts of freedom, justice and human dignity. So, even for the sake of humanity and justice, they appeal that we must oppose all moral restraints on sex.

Opponents of the traditional sexual morals say that the old concepts gave rise to the following:

(1) Male sense of possession of his female,

(2) Male jealousy,

(3) Male concern for establishing his paternity of a child,

(4) Asceticism and monasticism based on the assumed sinfulness and wickedness of human sexual relations,

(5) Female sense of impurity arising from her menstruating nature,

(6) Male abstinence from sexual relations with a menstruating female,

(7) Severe punishments at the hands of men undergone by women throughout recorded history; and

(8) Causing women to remain economically dependent on men.

They claim that the above state of affairs is attributable to the conventional sexual morality, indicative of the cruel and superstitious individual and social restraints applied under primitive conditions. They seek to replace the old values by modernistic permissiveness. For one thing, they point out, modern wives are not to be treated as chattels.

In the same vein, they proclaim that today contraceptives preempt any need to ensure paternity of a child in a forcible manner such as implicit in the old moral prescription of the female chastity!

The supporters of the proposed new sexual freedom further affirm that old ascetic and monastic orders and beliefs are dying out. Knowledge and sanitary means of personal hygiene are said to have freed women from harbouring any sense of pollution while menstruating. They are convinced that the days when men could manage to be cruel and oppressive are gone for ever.

They conclude that enslaving or illtreatment of women and making them utterly dependent on men are now things of the past. For, women are regaining socioeconomic freedom. Moreover, modern governments are gradually taking upon themselves major socioeconomic responsibilities of a husband and father, including mothercare and childcare. On the other hand, human jealousy is on the decline with the spread of modern sexual attitudes and behavioural norms. Accordingly, they suggest that we should no longer cling to the old moral system.

The foregoing criticism of old morality is offered by sexual liberationists as the basis of their proposed new morals. Of course, this is to be expected of those who oppose conventional morals.

Now, let us examine the reformatory content of the proposed new morals. At the: outset, we recognize the fact that their intended casting away of the traditional moral constraints on human sexuality constitutes the axis around which the proposed new morals revolve. Accordingly, the very first thing that is likely to receive their attention is what they consider to be a need to ensure freedom of individual action towards fulfilling one's sexuality, or towards bringing about conditions of free sexual love.

In pursuit of sexual liberty, they affirm the unrestrained joys of not only premarital but post marital experimentation with one's sexuality. They point out that, through the least expensive and rather safe means of contraception, sexual enjoyment can be diversified without necessarily involving any risk of pregnancy, legitimate or otherwise. Thus, they claim that any spouse can safely pursue his or her love affair to her heart's content, by taking lovers or becoming a love object without necessarily undermining their marriage. Moreover, they imply that not only illegitimate pregnancies can be avoided, but a wife can chose to have a legitimate child, without any moral concern about her extramarital affairs.

Any *communism* in sexual matters is obviously undesirable. Also, it is impracticable if the genetic need to ensure paternity of a child is to be ensured. Even those who propose the new sexual freedom seek to retain legitimacy of a child, or to safeguard the paternity as something not to be eliminated. After all, a father's blood relationship with his son and the latter's filial obligation and affinity towards the former are always recognizable. This is the philosophy behind selection of a particular spouse and one's marital undertaking to voluntarily confine sexual relations to her or him. In fact, conventional morality highlights no other, or greater, need than for rendering sexual relations in marriage specific to the couples themselves.

Bertrand Russell's proposed new morals are cited below:

"... Contraceptives have made parenthood voluntary and no longer a result of sexual intercourse. For various economic reasons... it seems likely that the father will have less importance in regard to the education and maintenance of children in the future than he has had in the past. There will therefore be no very cogent reason why a woman should choose as the father of her child the man whom she prefers as a lover or companion. It may become quite easily possible for women in the future, without any serious sacrifice of happiness, to select the fathers of their children, by eugenic considerations, while allowing their private feelings free sway as regards ordinary sexual companionship. For men it would be still easier to select the mothers of their children for their desirability as parents. Those who hold. as I do, that sexual behaviour concerns the community solely in so far as children are involved, must draw from this premise a twofold conclusion as regards the morality of the future. On the one hand that love apart from children should be free, but on the other hand, that the procreation of children should be a matter far more regulated by moral considerations than it is at present." [2]

Bertrand Russell elaborates further as follows:

"When science becomes able to pronounce on this question (of eugenics) with more certainty than is possible at present, the moral sense of the community may come to be more exacting from an eugenic point of view. The men with the best heredity may come to be eagerly sought after as fathers, while other men, though they may be acceptable as lovers, may find themselves rejected when they aim at paternity ...." [3]

Bertrand Russell's statements and proposals sometimes evidence a moral angle, too. For instance, he believes that traditional morality has been designed to cope with the strong and potentially troublesome human emotions, such as jealousy, which he advises men and women to consciously overcome. He says, in effect, as follows:

"According to the moral system that 1 propose, it is only right that couples should value mutual faithfulness. Alternatively, however, 1, recommend that they overcome jealousy. A sober way of *living is not possible without self control. So, it is better to discipline the potentially strong and troublesome emotion of jealousy, and not to allow it to prevent or impair the growth of the feelings of love and affection. Any shortcoming of conventional morality does not lie in its justification of self- control, but in the manner of exercising it.*

In other words, what Russell indicates is that he recommends the same self control as prescribed by the ancient moralists. However, he envisages self- control, not in any conventional terms of ensuring self respect and rectitude, but in completely overcoming jealousy. He contends that the ancients sought to unduly limit human sexuality.

In contrast, he advocates jealousy- free attainment of human sexuality. Conventional morality, providing for personal honour as well as vindication of individual modesty and self- respect, is considered by him to be outmoded. Instead, it seems as if he would like to see husbands who are least jealous of their wives' intimacy with other men and who are even grateful for the social permissiveness that allows extramarital relations with third persons.

At the same time, Russell says to the effect that children ought to be born to married couples only. He would like to ensure this through adoption of different contraceptive means of sterilizing any premarital, extramarital or post marital sexual relations. Furthermore, he recommends that:

"It is also by no means impossible that the jealousy of husbands, by a new convention, adapt itself to the new situation, and arise only when wives propose to choose some other man as the father of their children. In the East, men have always tolerated liberties on the part of eunuchs which most European husbands would resent. They have tolerated them because they introduce no doubt as to paternity. The same kind of toleration might easily be extended to liberties accompanied by *the use of contraceptives..'* [4]

The foregoing typifies a kind of reform of the extant social ethics, which in all probability would entail a never-ending process. No doubt, it will mean radical changes in the other ethics, too, including legal safeguards concerning the female modesty, incest, pornography, homosexuality, abortion, sexual intercourse during menstruation and similar others. Some of these, like protection of female modesty and banning pornography are sometimes upheld. Other questions like homo- sexuality have been occasionally treated outside the purview of sexual ethics, and in a clinical manner, so that medical reasons, and not necessarily moral restraints, can prevent any deviant behaviour!

The modernistic sexual ethics described above require to be thoroughly examined before any ready acceptance. In the present context, only its basic elements will be discussed and evaluated. Then, the philosophy underlying Islamic morals, which are quite distinctive from the Western - traditional as well as modern - morality, will be explained. This will highlight the Islamic position to the effect that:

"The only school of thought still capable of guiding humanity, through the distressingly unwholesome effects and untoward consequences of Western speculations concerning the dynamic philosophy of human living and sociological evolution, is that of Islam. It is high time that West oriented societies, with all their scientific and industrial advantages, realize their continuing need to turn Eastward in the process of their assimilating a salutary

philosophy of life, as they have indeed done in their past epochs."

Notes:

1- *Women and Her Rights*,

2- *Marriage and Morals,* pp. 173-174

3- *Marriage and Morals,* pp. 173-174

4- *Ibid*. pp. 194-195

Chapter 4

A Critical Examination Of The Theoretical Basis Of The Proposed New Sexual Freedom

In the preceding chapter, the salient features of the proposed new sexual morality have been discussed. Now, it is intended to evaluate its basic principles. These are restated below:

(1) Personal liberty of every individual should be invariably respected and protected, provided it does not conflict with that of others. In other words, an individual's liberty is limited by no other consideration than the liberty of another individual.

(2) Human well being lies in their individual nurturing and fulfilment of their inborn aptitudes and desires. If these natural inclinations are interfered with, it will lead to egotism and personality disturbances arising from sexual frustration in particular. And, the natural instincts and desires are bound to go awry, if these are not fulfilled or satisfied.

(3) Limitations and restraints on the natural instincts and desires of human beings tend to intensify the cravings and inflame the passions. Their uninhibited fulfilment signifies contentment, enabling a person to overcome any excessive preoccupation with a natural urge, such as the sexual one.

The three principles above respectively concern human philosophy, training and psychology. They are put forward as justification for what the new moralists consider it to be the correct way, i.e. dispensing with the conventional morals, restraints and limitations, in order to ensure individual liberty, to promote, and not to frustrate, sexual gratification.

First, let us examine the above principles on the basis of statements and views of the supporters of the proposed new moral system. For, none of them seem to have fully identified the principles underlying their contributions to the proposed new morality.

The principle of individual liberty is actually basic to the sociological realization of human rights. However, those who seek to promote the new concepts of morality evidently-and wrongly - assume that personalized sexual freedom has no social implications. This is because of their obvious assumption that when individuals are free to pursue their sexual interests, they are expected to observe no more than privacy, so as not to adversely affect the rights of other persons.

At the same time, they recommend safeguards in the interest of society, even to the limited extent of assuring paternity and care of children. According to their proposed new safeguards, a wife is to bear her husband's child only. Otherwise, she is free to pursue her sexual motivations, using contraceptives, which not only avoid pregnancy, but enable her to ignore the time- honoured moral restraints of chastity and faithfulness, if she so desires.

In the above context, two implications concerning individual freedom require detailed examination. The *first* one arises from the modernistic contention that personal liberty cannot be limited, except by that of other individuals and the need to respect theirs. The *second* implication refers to the claim that sexual relations requiring the assurance of paternity and

filial affinity of a possible child do not involve any further connection with society, public life and social prerogatives.

With regard to individual liberty, let us consider the philosophy behind the same. The essential thing in any individual management of personal freedom, and in one's entitlement to its protection, is his or her qualitative need for gradually evolving a harmonious and respectable manner of progressing one's individual life, towards enhancing the higher faculties. Due emphasis on the aforesaid need is noticeably missing in several Western interpretations or applications of the concept of personal freedom. In any case, individual freedom should not lead to any sexual permissiveness, enabling one to pander to lusty impulses and self centered desires. For, any misconception of personal freedom cannot be encouraged, or respected, by those who can (or ought to) realize its dire consequences.

That personal liberty of any individual, born free with the innate desires and self will, should be cherished as long as he or she respects the entitlements of other persons, can be rather very misleading. For, aside from the need to avoid any self expository interpersonal conflicts, it is necessary for any society to recognize that the larger and higher interests of a person himself or herself ought to conscientiously limit his or her individual freedom. Any continuing neglect of the aforementioned moral requirement can further aggravate the harm already done to the very basic concept of morality and the wrong done to the understanding of personal freedom in its own name!

Bertrand Russell was once asked as to whether or not he would consider himself bound to any particular system of morality. He replied in the affirmative and proceeded to explain his answer by giving a hypothetical example of how individual morality can be viewed in the social context. The scenario he mentioned was more or less as follows:

"Supposing Mr. X wants to do something which is useful to himself, but harmful to his neighbours. Then he carries out his intention, inconveniencing his neighbours. The latter decide among themselves to the effect: 'We cannot do something that he cannot take undue advantage of. A situation like this is rather suggestive of a criminal implication ..."

Bertrand Russell emphasized reasoning and intellectual judgment in the above case. Then he pointed out that morality did signify the need to harmonize the private and public aspects of individual behaviour.

From a practical viewpoint, the aforesaid case of new morality hardly suggests any Platonic utopia. Russell's interpretation of morality evidences no precedence of any inexorable values of life over the intrinsically or potentially baneful things. There is no trace in his suggestions of anything that makes human beings subject themselves and their material interests to any higher intellectual or spiritual considerations.

On the contrary, morals indicative of comprehensive meaning and significance are termed by him as 'taboos'. The only thing he considers to be sacred or inviolable is accomplishing one's personal inclinations and desires without inhibition. The only restraint on any particular manifestation of individual freewill approved by him is its compatibility with that of other persons. Even so, he leaves unanswered the question as to what congenial power or faculty should be instrumental in keeping personal freedom within limits of reason, sanity and decency, and to render it harmonious with that of others. Nevertheless, Bertrand Russell's scenario mentioned above is useful in attempting a possible reply to the question of

individuals limiting each other's personal liberty. Accordingly, the scenario can be adapted as follows:

"Mr. X's neighbours can restrain or stop him from harming their interest, while serving his own. He is convinced that his neighbours in their own interest will mutually agree to prevent him. Accordingly, he is reconciled to the fact of his helplessness to do anything without coordinating his own interest with that of his neighbours."

The foregoing is illustrative of the sterility of Bertrand Russell's moral philosophy, based --as it is on the crucial stipulation that an individual can (or ought to) serve his own interest and, at the same time, safeguard the rights and interests of the general public. This is so, considering that no norms of individual and group behaviour can be identical.

Evidently, certain hypothetical assumptions underlie the new morality proposed by Russell. For one thing, he implies that individuals and groups in a society can always manage to employ their benign powers envisaged under the proposed new morality. Secondly, he assumes that interpersonal and group unity and consensus are always readily forthcoming against individual transgressors. Then, he takes it for granted that an individual, who stands alone and weak, can nevertheless always decide to initiate any action against something of interest to a majority.

However, individual and collective powers of thinking and action can vary. People adversely affected by an individual transgression are seldom prepared to achieve unanimity and unity. Furthermore, one does not always decide to act against any majority interest, specially without confidence in one's own strength.

The ethics proposed by Bertrand Russell may be cogent enough to be recommended to any weak members of a society. For, the weak may be readily cowed down by sheer force of the strong and influential whose rights they may dutifully respect. However, when it comes to, actually preventing any transgression by the strong and powerful-, against the weak, the proposed ethics will probably fail to take effect.

For, the strong may well gang up against the weak. They may stifle any rare protest, or overwhelm any sign of resistance, from among the weak. What is worse, the strong can always say that their behavioural philosophy is not against the new ethics as recommended! In actual practice, they can even deem it unnecessary to harmonize their personal interests with those of the others.

Accordingly, Russell's moral philosophy may be construed as one of the most effective means of perpetuating the dictatorial concept of *might is right*. No doubt, Bertrand Russell devoted his active life towards advocating the cause of freedom, while defending the rights of the weak. Yet, ironically enough, his moral philosophy tended to consolidate vested interests and dictatorial tendencies in a society. This type of contradiction is often discernible in Western philosophizing, so that it would appear that what is preached is intended to be different from what is practised.

The second implication concerns marriage and family living, in that their private and public (or social) aspects are to be determined. No doubt, individual happiness and mutual enjoyment of life are sought by persons intending to marry. Now, two questions arise as to how best to serve and enhance a couple's interest towards achieving and maintaining a happily

married life. Firstly, one may ask as to whether or not any enjoyment of life is best accomplished within the privacy of a family itself? Alternatively, should any pursuit of sex oriented happiness be extended beyond the privacy of family living to public gatherings, including places of work, social encounters, downtown entertainment areas and the milieu outside a family, where people usually seek to accomplish sensuous or sensual pleasures?

Islam has recommended that a couple's mutual enjoyment be confined to the privacy of their family living, so that they remain fully oriented towards each other. Islam has determined that any sex-oriented pursuit of happiness and enjoyment in public is to be avoided. Accordingly, any vicarious satisfactions derived from a sexually permissive society, including female exhibitionism in public are not allowed in Islam.

Western societies, which seem to fascinate some among us in more or less a blind manner, evidently favour the alternative proposition in the second question above. They have shifted the focus of attention to sex from the privacy of family living to its vicarious satisfaction in public. They do pay dearly for this moral lapse. Some of their thinkers express concern about deteriorating individual and societal morality in a sex- obsessed milieu. They are also stunned when they find how some communist societies have successfully taken sex off the public arena, saving the youth in the process.

Life's enjoyment cannot be equated with lustful or sensual living.

Individual happiness does not lie in maximizing the pleasures of eating, sleeping and sex. On the other hand, one may suppose that human propensity to enjoy sex- like pleasures, and conversely suffer dissatisfaction, can be as instinctively limited as that of animals.

However, this assumption can be wrong, since human seeking of physiological contentment is susceptible to be carried beyond married life and family living to the society at large.

However, persons of opposite sex whose souls, rather than bodies, have attracted each other can indeed be sincere in their mutual affection, after they agree to become husband and wife. Their marital happiness can extend beyond' the passionate youth to mutually cherished companionship towards even ripe old age.

Likewise, it is conceivable that a man used to the most intimate and satisfying relationship with his legitimate and faithful wife can indeed discriminate against any animal- like pleasures of the body, such as obtainable from a prostitute: Accordingly, one would not like to deflect in the least from what is most desirable and wholesome to what is sensuously pleasurable and conveniently transient.

Clearly, it is very essential that activities involving human sexuality are limited to couples, who are married, and to the privacy of their family living. For this purpose, it is necessary to safeguard the functional integrity and mutual compatibility of a family and its social milieu.

Marriage and family living are very significant functional aspects of a society. They are responsible institutional aspects for the benefit of the posterity. Family upbringing of children determines the quality of successive generations. In this context, individual and mutual capabilities of husbands and wives, towards appropriately raising children, is a crucial factor. At the same time, a father's concern for his offspring is bound to be conducive to a positive upbringing of the latter.

Human congeniality, in both individual and social contexts, is best developed in a harmonious family atmosphere. A child's exuberant spirit and natural temperament is substantially conditioned and trained by the parents.

When appealing to the good sense and common interest of two persons, we invoke their affinity with the community they may belong to, or the possibility of their regarding each other like two brothers. For that matter, we may even emphasize the brotherhood of mankind. The mutual devotion and faithfulness of pious *mumineen* is compared in the Holy Qur'an with the sincere regards that brothers have for each other.

Brotherhood among human beings does not come merely from any blood relationship or racial affinity. When we speak of brotherhood of man, what we signify is that the congeniality of two brothers in a family can well be reflected among individuals in a society. If brotherliness and affection which can be imbibed in a family are eliminated, it is doubtful if people can really show genuine consideration for each other.

They say that in Europe there is considerable sense of justice, but fellow-feeling is very limited. Even real brothers, as well as fathers and sons, evidence very little affection for each other. This is quite in contrast to the general run of people and families in the East.

Why, it is so? The answer revolves around the fact that human love and sympathy are qualities which are attributable to a wholesome upbringing of children by really affectionate and united families. Evidently, families in Europe no longer are able effectively to cherish these qualities. The solidarity between husbands and wives, often noticeable in the East, is frequently missing in the West. A significant reason can be the fact that Westerners have come to believe in sex without love or inhibition. Sexual experimentation and diversification do not allow any specific interpersonal love to develop. They tend to be indiscriminate in seeking sexual enjoyment.

Chapter 5

Basic Need for Humane Conditioning of Natural Instincts And Desires

The need to refine and condition the raw natural instincts and desires of individuals in a benign manner is a basic one. Harmonious personal growth is conducive to wholesome interaction with fellowmen, which in turn leads to a salutary impact on the humanity at large.

An appropriate conditioning and training of an individual's natural potentialities brings about spiritual rewards, too. These include a spiritually balanced personal outlook and intellectual composure, necessary for any sound and beneficial endeavour. Psychosomatically balanced persons are emotionally stable and competent to achieve social harmony and peace.

On the other hand, any unduly inhibited or imbalanced growth of an individual personality is quite undesirable. So are any adverse external influences or pressures and strains of a negative kind. For, negatively conditioned people become susceptible to causing excesses, untold miseries and cruelties not only to themselves, but to others.

The traditional non-Islamic moralists regarded sex and love as if these were manifestations of an obnoxious evil to be shunned. In contrast, the modernistic societies tended to consider free love as not only desirable but respectable. No doubt, the free love concept began to receive every preferential treatment and encouragement for its worldwide growth.

With regard to Islamic morals, these can be properly understood with reference to the following points:

(a) Islamic morals and their compatibility with the objective requirements of natural growth of sexuality as part of inborn human instincts and potentialities;

(b) Suppression of human concupiscence;

(c) Modernistic sexual permissiveness as a major cause of sexual or sex-oriented aberrations or deviations of human behaviour, preventing harmonious growth of the natural instincts and potentialities of an individual;

(d) Democratic attitudes towards sexual behaviour;

(e) Sexual morality, as compared to general ethical conduct in the economic and political fields;

(f) Love and the forlorn condition in which it remains a longing; and

(g) Love and harmonious growth of human personality.

To begin with, the fact that natural human instincts should be nurtured, and not suppressed, is to be recognized. At the same time, it is necessary to conceptualize beyond any simplistic determination in terms of good and bad.

The Islamic approach takes into consideration the overall need for promoting a salubrious growth of human personality as an a priori requirement, based on deductive logic. The premises recognized in Islam include the factual position that every constituent part of the human body has a specific purpose or function. The biological purposes and functions are sustained by a person's will o nurture the same, even beyond the instinctive motivations. Accordingly, human volition, intellectual capabilities and similar other aspects of spiritual nature must be enhanced, too.

We could well imagine a situation where no traditional evolution of morality is allowed. This would mean that the inborn human potentialities are either harmoniously cultivated or prevented from such development. In any case, it stands to reason that human faculty to discern things and to comprehend the natural order of things, would have induced the necessary process of harmonization.

A hundred years ago, scholars and social scientists recognized the need for a psychosomatically balanced development of human personality. Societies of the time lacked a correct overall human perspective. There was a markedly deficient realization of the moral traditions. Negativating tendencies affected all-round human development.

In fact, there has never been any doubt about promoting an all round growth of human personality. This is implicit in the very word training,, which has always been used to indicate human development.

Any correct and effective approach to training of human beings must aim at overcoming tendencies leading to disturbances of personality and morbid conditions of disorder and indiscipline, affecting the body, the mind and the spirit. A naturally harmonious and spiritually balanced human growth should include the training of the sex instinct in particular.

In the above context, Islam offers the most appropriate guidance. This position is intended to be clarified and established in the discussion that follows.

At the outset, we must stipulate that any preconceived or ill conceived notion concerning Islamic ethics must be avoided.

For instance, some people appear to harbour the notion that Islamic morality inhibits, rather than promotes, any free growth of human faculties. They wrongly believe that the Islamic explanations carry no intrinsic significance in the matter of refining and improving the natural human instincts.

Actually, the Holy Qur'an is replete with instances of emphasis on human refinement, such as when it asserts that a conscientiously righteous person is one who has been able to refine, discipline and purify his natural instincts and desires. (قد افلح من زكيها).

This quotation further implies that human conscience is liable to pollution. At the same time, it suggests that human beings can improve their individual conscientiousness by overcoming any polluted state affecting the same. Above all, the Holy Qur'an considers pollution-free conscience to be indispensable for attaining righteousness and happiness.

There can be no denying the intrinsic meaning and significance of the moral values taught by the Glorious Qur'an. The aforementioned teaching and its explanation pinpoints a

conscientious approach to the problem of human refinement. No school of thought or moral procedure rules out human susceptibility to pollution of the conscience or psyche and the consequent need to purifying and ameliorating the undesirable condition. Human psyche is vulnerable to prurient desires, moral aberrations and psychopathological disorders, just as the human body or organs are liable to disease.

An individual can feel within himself or herself the specific nature and extent of any physiological or psychological or spiritual ailments of his or her own. An individual does this to an extent far more real and complete with regard to himself or herself, than in respect of other persons, or for that matter, even in the case of any environmental pollutions. Thus, it is possible and necessary to ensure righteousness and rectitude on an individual basis, through a psychosomatically and spiritually harmonious personality development. The Holy Qur'an makes this point thoroughly clear.

There is another Qur'anic description of the raw, natural self of an untrained person: (أمّارة بالسّوء) According to this description, a person's untamed or inappropriately trained self is referred to as a *commander* of evil (thoughts and deeds). Does it mean that a non-disciplined *self* can be wicked by nature, according to the Qur'an?

The reply to the abovementioned question cannot be positive. this is because, theoretically speaking, a human being, if born malignant, cannot be expected to be amenable to any training that seeks to metamorphosize him into becoming naturally benign. On the contrary, the very existence of naturally malignant beings deserves to be treated as undesirable, since they are potentially harmful. They ought to be prevented from growing and assuming menacing proportions. Their malignant impact would require to be curbed even by occasionally eliminating them!.

So, the correct answer is that there is no wickedness built into the very nature of a human being. Only, in particular situations, and in specific circumstances, an individual becomes vulnerable to wickedness and nurturing it, developing a malignant disposition in the process.

Any negative representation of man's basic nature as a source of evil and wickedness is not implied in the Quranic philosophy, as already indicated above.

Then, one may as well ask two more questions. Firstly, what can be the particular circumstances or specific causes, which lead human beings toward becoming wicked and corrupt? Secondly, how can the depraved and corrupt be rendered harmless and brought back to the righteous path of sanity and moderation?

Answers to the above questions require a comprehensive and positive understanding of the relevant Qur anic teachings. For, they lie beyond any wrong and narrow minded interpretations, such as arising from any literally isolated or absolute or negative understanding of the Qur'anic description of human self as *commander* of evil. Actually, according to the Holy Our'an. the self can be not only a commander of evil, but a conscientious reprover. (النفس اللوامة). Elsewhere, the Qur'an, refers to the self also as an abode of human peace and excellence. (النّفس المطمئنّة)

The Quranic descriptions of *self* indicate that human nature can have different stages of growth and manifestation. At one stage, it can be prone to mischief and wickedness. Where

anything undesirable is already perpetrated, it can also ruefully blame itself. Above all, it is capable of attaining the most desirable stage of human excellence and composure, beyond vulnerability to anything bad or wicked.

Islam does not presuppose any inherent wickedness of human nature. So, it is at variance with the speculative philosophies and systems of human training evolved in India, or those enunciated by some ancient cynical philosophers. Furthermore, it differs from the teachings of Manes, of ancient Persia. The Islamic approach is distinctive from that evolved in Christianity, as well. Islamic code of moral conduct does not evidently subscribe to any denial, or suppression, of human instincts, nor does it prescribe anything reminiscent of penal servitude in overcoming carnal desires.

The ancients might not have clearly realized that under specific circumstances or in certain situations or at some stage of personal disciplining, human nature could get awry and become vulnerable to wickedness or evil that is capable of assuming dangerous proportions. However, in modern times, when a scientifically investigated basis of human personality development has been arrived at, there can be no longer any doubt about the need to discipline one's own *self*.

The Holy Quran significantly reveals and pinpoints various aspects of human personality development. Identification of the negative tendencies of human nature is meant for emphasizing the positive aspects that can lead to an excellent flowering of human personality.

Even where the *self* has been described as *commander of evil* (امّارة بالسّوء).the contextual inference is to the effect that human *self* is capable of inviting evil. (داعية بالسّوء)This distinction is important, in that human beings are made aware of their predominantly raw instinctiveness which, unless refined and trained, is naturally forceful enough to overwhelm any humanely cultivated qualities conducive to spiritual enhancement. This seems to be an aspect yet to be fully identified by modern psychologists.

Nevertheless, it is widely accepted today that emotional disorders can occasionally lead to mental illness. This can happen in some mysterious and arbitrary manner, in which the faculty of conscious perception is not involved. Consequently, the mind functions in an aberrant manner, so as to carry out the dictates or impulses of emotional origin.

The positive and negative factors in human personality development are further examined later on herein, in the context of modernistic sexual permissiveness. Meanwhile, an explanation of the meaning and connotation of suppressing carnality is desirable.

With regard to suppressing human concupiscence, Islam does not envisage it in any way. This is true for other instincts, too. Then, what is meant by suppression of carnal desire? Does it mean elimination of causes leading to it?

In the Islamic context, it signifies effective and moderate coping with the human concupiscence. This is emphasized also in many scholarly explanations of Islamic morality. Islam teaches human beings to overcome the natural predisposition of the bodily sensuality to rule over any sensibility of the mind. In other words, an individual must not be led by his natural instincts (نفس امّاره), but manage the same in a wholesome manner. As mentioned earlier, Islam does not preach any ascetic suppression of concupiscence or natural desires.

To elaborate on the above point, it may be noted that, when a person is commanded by his instincts, he or she evidences a disorderly manifestation of human personality, a disruptive and overwhelming influence capable of affecting human conscience. Not allowing instincts to sway one's conscience necessarily implies pacifying and quenching the natural outpourings of carnal desire, or offsetting the palpability to temptation, emotional disorders or even sexual promiscuity.

Ofcourse, eliminating temptation means taming the animal-like instincts. This is possible when temptation is avoided in a natural and harmonious manner. This necessitates overcoming tendencies leading to social evils and psychological ills. Thus, eliminating temptation does not require casting out the external forces, human or otherwise, which may be causing it.

On the contrary, what is required is to eliminate the internal causes and tendencies. This is necessary to avoid malignant development of the libido. Vulnerability to any undesirable external influences is also overcome in the process. A wholesome development of human instincts is a process requiring either a salutary compliance or a moral inhibition of their negative upsurge depending on their nature and content.

Incidentally, it is notable that the phrase: *killing the carnal desire*, does not occur in any specific teaching of Islam. Any reference to it is only by way of explaining the need for a salubrious growth of personality.

Towards satisfying natural instincts and desires, any one-sided approach entails shortcomings, which are not often removable subsequently Since the last century, sex-oriented psychological research achievements concentrated on proving that suppression of the natural instincts and desires was fraught with many adverse consequences to individuals. The microscopic investigations and findings proved to be valuable in themselves.

For one thing, traditional thinking to the effect that the more the baser instincts are suppressed the greater the scope for enhancing the higher faculties (such as the intellectual) has become valid. There is growing realization that extraordinary and far-reaching consequences, affecting individuals and their society both, underlie suppressed or unsatisfied instincts and desires, which are often hidden from the conscious mind.

The question of satisfying carnal instincts and spontaneous desires could well be left to one's own judgment. For, only human intellect can prevent any untoward instinctive development. One can purposefully manage one's own natural promptings and ensure that they are not negativated or harmed or frustrated in an unwholesome manner.

Many nervous and mental disorders affecting individuals, and even society as a whole, have been traced by psychologists and psychiatrists to personal feelings of deprivation, specially with regard to the sexual instinct. They have proved that emotional deprivations give rise to psychological complexes. The psychological afflictions can assume even dangerous proportions, resulting in sadism, morbid insolence, extreme jealousy, becoming a recluse or a cynic and similar others.

These findings concerning human instincts and desires represent some of the psychologically significant discoveries and successes achieved by mankind.

An increasingly popular awareness of and interest in the nature and content of the human senses may lead to further research and findings. The discoveries are likely to be of a kind that conforms to the needs of technological and industrial progress. These may be conducive to better identification and greater employment of the natural, specially inorganic, forces. However, psychological and spiritual aspects of problems may not receive popular attention. Thus, their awareness may be confined to learned men and the wise.

Psychosomatic integrity in human personality development has been emphasized since the beginning of recorded history. Islam, too, has significantly pinpointed its need. Traditional moralists, as well as behavioural scientists, have always tried to reflect the cumulative knowledge and wisdom evolved in the past in one way or the other. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the psychosomatic approach has been scientifically established only during the last one hundred years or so.

Now, let us see how best the principle of psychosomatic wellbeing can be practised. Evidently, it cannot be used as easily as penicillin. It is an abstraction that requires a certain ability to comprehend. Moreover, it is suggestive of the intricacy and diversity of psychological and other problems, which often have been investigated in, a microscopic perspective. At the same time, obscuring considerations of morality and underrating personal character development have come to be the order of the day, which apparently suits many ease-loving and hard-pressed people of modern societies.

Worst still, the genuine need for promoting a wholesome fulfilment of natural instincts and desires, of a harmless kind, has been misinterpreted or misapplied in actual practice. Thus, an unrestrained gratification of human sexuality has come to be prescribed, ostensibly for avoiding their undesirable frustration. Consequently, the psychological complexes and tensions have tended to increase rather than decrease.

Statistics often indicate a virulent growth of psychological diseases, mental disorders, suicides, crimes of passion, anxiety, mental anguish, or restlessness, hopelessness, pessimism, jealousy, malice, or malevolence and similar other psychosomatic manifestations of unwholesome human personality development. The inhumane development of an ever-increasing number of individuals has been explained to be arising from the modernistic permissiveness with regard to natural instincts and desires, including uninhibited or unrestrained sex.

For centuries there has been widespread and insistent opposition to any permissiveness towards lust and sensuality. This was mainly in order to avoid the baneful effects of human sensuality or deviation, on individual morality, spirituality and activities, as well as on the peace and integrity of society. All this has been sought to be reversed in a sudden and arbitrary manner by the protagonists of a modernistic permissive society.

The reversal was sought, as if eschewing lust and subjecting oneself to chastity, rectitude, endurance, moral and social restrictions or limits, is capable of disturbing a person's spiritual wellbeing and his own society's peacefulness. Above all, the reversal was sought as if morality and avoidance of lust or sensuality are actually irrelevant to any benign personal conduct, or a positive development of human personality.

The volte face has come about as if there has always been a great and insistent demand for lifting the moral restraints or limits. The social change was sought as if it were really necessary to absolve people of their moral scruples, duties arid obligations and thus liberating them from an .assumed malevolence.

The reformist motivation seemed to be geared to some imaginary need to let people enjoy themselves to their hearts' content, irrespective of any moral compunction or conscious commitment to chastity and rectitude. All these are supposed to be conducive towards peacefully maintaining whatever social order has come to prevail, while purporting to free the people from psychological disorders!

Evidently, the seductive concept of free play of natural instincts and desires has been offered as a reformatory safeguard against moral and social constraints, as if these have a corrupting impact! Furthermore, the concept has readily appealed to many young and single persons, including a substantial number in our own country.

From what we have noticed, the supporters of a permissive kind of society have a peculiar way of thinking. They seem to believe that nothing is better for an individual than placing himself or herself at the disposal of the sweet dictates of the heart, while allowing the latter to be dominated even by lust.

At the same time, they apparently rationalize that the actions resulting from their way of thinking can be construed as both human and moralistic to the point of their being accepted as potential experts in sophisticated social behaviour. They apparently suggest that their thinking augurs them well, even if it represents a subject of ridicule to others. Furthermore, they profess to seek both self-gratification and service to their kind. They mean to ensure satiation of every bodily urge and to cope with any spiritual need, as well.

In other words, they seem to equate good or normal conduct with sensuality. Their imagination is not totally dissimilar to the metaphorical use of *love* by some mystics, in the manner of Sufis. They apparently sought communion with whatever images of female beauty and love they could visualize, even in Divine terms!!

Consequently, the modernistic freeplay with the natural instincts and desires failed to replace psychosomatic illnesses or neurotic disorders by any spiritual contentment. Human afflictions continued to spread, bringing one misfortune after another in an increasingly pernicious manner. No wonder, some promoters of uninhibited sexual development, such as Freud, were sensible enough to retract from their original claims, or subsequently modify or clarify the same.

They reiterated the position that there was no easy way out of the traditionally evolved social norms and constraints. They clarified to the effect that human sexual concupiscence is not a programmable quantity, or a self-contained input, for any complete or instant satisfaction. They also referred to the need for sublimating it, so as to channel human energies directly towards intellectual enhancement in solving problems of educational, scientific, cultural, socio-economic and technological significance.

New morals of the kind advocated by Bertrand Russell, are supposed to be conducive to a positive development of human personality. At the same time, it is alleged that traditional morals inhibit human development. The fact that, in the wake of the new morals, human

afflictions and distress have become aggravated disproves the abovementioned claims, so that they deserve to be subjected to the same allegations as they make against traditional morals.

Today, social scientists are microscopically endeavouring to cope with particular manifestations, as well as specific difficulties, found in their societies. In the present social conditions, young persons are consciously avoiding marriage. Pregnancy and upbringing of children are becoming somewhat abhorrent to many women, who seem to be less interested in even housekeeping.

Marriages are in evidence more in the traditional societies and conservative families than in the modern ones. On the other hand, neurotic conflicts in persons of both sexes are on the increase evidencing unusual psychosomatic and spiritual ailments.

Some among the social scientists opine that the traditional social values have been fundamentally overtaken and superseded by the manpower requirements of the modern industrial revolution. Actually, however, morals, traditional or otherwise, ought to remain the same in their intrinsic values and connotations. They are not affected by any changing patterns of human living from an agricultural setting to an industrial one.

Changes in any familiar patterns of human living and social interaction are only construed to be fundamental in some revolutionary intellectual way! The seemingly revolutionary thinking is attributable to some individuals with whom must lie the grave responsibility for any consequent misfortunes befalling humanity.

Even Bertrand Russell speaks of the pitfalls involved in speculative thinking, including his own. For instance, he favours an unrestrained gratification of the sexual instinct on one hand, and concedes the necessity of adhering to a time-tested system of its self-regulation, on the other. However, it is not intended, at this stage, to elaborate further on the pros and cons of modernistic thinking concerning human sexuality.

In reality, any appropriate compliance with the natural instincts, instead of suppressing them, does not mean the same thing as liberating sexuality by denouncing the age old moral restraints and constraints. The natural instincts and desires are not incompatible with chastity and virtue. In fact, they are adequately satisfied only within a chaste and virtuous regulatory framework, which avoids the evils of promiscuous behaviour, enforced celibacy or self-denial and the resultant emotional disturbances.

In other words, appropriate nurturing of human instincts means nothing different from overcoming lust and baser inclinations. The basic distinction between human beings and animals is that the former are capable of two kinds of desires: one is a genuinely natural urge and the other is a pseudo-desire.

Genuine desires conform to the naturally essential requirements, such as the desires for food, survival, self-protection, the sexual drive, the inclination for aggression or domination and similar others. Everyone of tire genuinely natural desires have a specific function, which they serve with a definite purpose. Aside from the fact that they are limited to their specific functions and purposes, all these are individually capable of forming a basis for a pseudo-desire, such as the well-known false appetite.

Most natural desires are amenable to complete satisfaction. Satisfying the others, including the sexual drive, involves psychological complications. For, the mind and the human spirit is at times capable of sustaining bodily desires beyond the natural limits of physiological satisfaction. Some intellectually sustained cravings never reach a saturation point!

Accordingly, it is quite misleading to suggest an uninhibited gratification of carnal desires, by prescribing freedom from moral restraints and curbs on the natural instincts. Those who prescribe it fail to distinguish between the qualities of human beings and animals. They ignore the fact that there can be no end to human desire or craving.

Human beings are prone to seize every opportunity towards self-satisfaction. They unceasingly avail every occasion to advance their own interests. This is equally true in matters of acquiring wealth, economics, politics and government, as well as in seeking to dominate others or to intensify sexuality.

To suggest that relieving the sex urge is like attending to one's call of nature, such as urination or defecation, is quite misleading, too. Any question of evacuating from one's self his or her own moral scruples or conditions, in the process of obtaining instant sexual relief, does not arise. Conversely, safeguarding one's morality cannot mean the same as accumulating urine. For, unlike moral continence, retention of urine is bound to cause bodily comfort and disease.

For a better appreciation of the above point, let us assume that a person finds, along the avenues and streets he frequents, several clean, well-kept and even cost-free public urinals. Yet, one could not use them to his or her heart's content to an extent beyond what one's bladder permits! Accordingly, these nice urinals could not (or should not) unduly attract a person (to urinate).

Some modernistic people assume that all human inclinations, irrespective of whether or not these concern sex, aggression, domination or mammon worship, should be freely allowed to be satisfied. This is supposed to be capable of eliminating human deprivation, frustration or dissatisfaction, in the process of satisfying one's desires. Their reasoning is based on a false assumption. For, as pointed out earlier, complete gratification of all human desires is not possible.

Human capacity to seek gratification of the natural and acquired desires is not instinctively limited, as in the case of animals. Had this not been the case, there would have been no need for any human regulation of not only the sexual intercourse, but socio-economic and political interactions, as well. Even moral restraints would have been unnecessary where natural constraints made it impossible for anyone to seek excessive satisfaction, .or indulge in excesses. The very limitation of natural capacity (to commit any excesses) would have served the purpose, as in the case of animals.

However, ethical limits and procedural regulations are necessary for promoting just practices and fair transactions in the socio-economic and political fields.

Likewise, limitation on, and regulation of, sexual behaviour and the related activities, consistent with the needs of chastity and rectitude, should also be acceptable to everyone.

Chapter 6

Love, Sexual Discipline and Chastity

Democratic Morality, Love in Personality Growth
That principles of human liberty and democracy should govern morals, too, is both right and correct, as in the case of politics. The intrinsic meaning is that human beings should cope with their inborn instincts and natural desires, in the same way as a just and democratic government does in respect of the masses of people.

Islam treats questions concerning sexual behaviour on the same ethical basis as is commonly recognized today in the regulation of political and economic activities. For, individuals are prone to making genuine and wilful mistakes in ordering their sexual lives on the basis of their own moral judgment. They may, through misconception, or wantonly, ignore the need for maintaining a democratic concern for morality, in coping with their individual problems, arising in circumstances evidencing lack of any personal restraint and overall chaos.

In principle, any societal regulation of political and economic activities ought to recognize the relevant human instincts and tendencies. For, the aggression instinct and tendency to dominate others can be instrumental in politics. Economic activities may be prompted by a desire to accumulate wealth. Likewise, sexual aptitude can lead to indulgence in lustful activities. However, it is not known why the supporters of the proposed new sexual freedom deem a laissez *faire policy* fit for sexual affairs only, while they seemingly accept the controllability of political and economic activities.

One of the important aspects of sexual ethics concerns the emotion of love. Since the ancient times, the essence of love has been given special attention in philosophy. Ibn Sina (in the Islamic millenium) brought out a treatise on love. Human love has been commonly acknowledged as a wholesome reality, in terms of its all embracing and sublime nature. In literature, specially the poetic, love has not only been eulogised, with a sense of pride (to the extent of proclaiming the superiority of the heart over the mind), but contrasted with lust's debasingly animal-like nature.

Mostly in our literature we find that love has been extolled not only in terms of its Divine connotation, but even in its down-to-earth human emotional context. In either case, there has been no confusion of love with any kind of lust.

In contrast, there have been others, who chose to equate love with a sort of libido, or any persistent metabolic intensity of the sexual instinct. Evidently, they tended to assume that love is rather incapable of sublimation even in Divine terms. They treat love as if it has neither any spiritual origin, nor it is (or ought to be) humane in quality, nor it can be humanitarian in purpose.

Those who treat love as both Divine and human differentiate between the animal-like manifestation and the humane accomplishment of love. The others make no such distinction, so that love and lust become synonymous.

Today, a third category of thinkers has become evident. They believe that all kinds of love are sexually prompted, but gradually the carnal motivation assumes a spiritual or contemplative

aspect under specific conditions. To them, love is primarily sexual, with only occasional platonic manifestations. However, this dual or two-fold quality of love is affirmed by them only in terms of its expression, objective and effects. There is no duality in so far as the origin and causation of love are concerned.

With regard to the last category of thinkers mentioned above, it is not a matter of surprise that they believe in a material basis of human spirituality They see no unsurmountable difficulty in the mutual transformation of the material and spiritual aspects of human behaviour. In fact, one of them claims that every spiritual affair has a natural basis and every natural thing has a spiritual extension. [1]

Be that as it may, we need not discuss the above in any great psychological and philosophical depth. We can thus avoid going into the pros and cons of the many ancient and current interpretations of any basis of love. For the time being, it should be enough to suggest that love, in effect, can bring about creativity of the human intellect and spirit, as well as induce artistic and cultural refinements of sociological importance.

The above suggestion is valid, irrespective of whether or not love originates in the sexual instinct, and then becomes capable of expressing itself in physical and also spiritual terms, in an interchangeable manner. Any sublime effect of love is far different from its alleged instinctiveness, or simple animal-like concupiscence, which seeks no more than its physiological gratification.

Love does evidence itself as lust in some circumstances. When lust overtakes human beings, the latter become self-centred, regarding love as a mere tool or means of self gratification. However, when human beings evidence love as a genuine affection, they are no longer self-centred. On the contrary, their love signifies the most desirable spirit of self-sacrifice.

In other words, individuals in genuine love are capable of overcoming their self-centred motivations for the sake of each other.

World literature is replete with love's many-splendoured qualities, including those of a catalyst, teacher and inspirer. From Persian literature, we may quote a verse from Sadi, as follows:

Whoever falls in love beyond himself,
yields to love but his own self,
Whoever loved not, evolved not manfulness,
Silver unmelted gives not brightfulness.

هرکس که عشق اندر او کمند انداخت
بمراد و یش باید ساخت
هرکه عاشق نگشت مرد نشد
نقره فائق نگشت تا نگداخت

Another famous Iranian poet, Hafiz, refers to a nightingale's love of roses and muses as follows:-

By rose's grace, nightingales do their singing
All those songs and lyrics so pleasing
Beyond what their beaks do improvising!

بلبل از فیض گل آموخت سخن، ورنه نبود
این همه قول و غزل، تعبیه در منقارش

No doubt, love has been eulogised in many ways, both in the East and West. Yet, there has come to be a difference between the Eastern and Western conceptualization of love. To many

Westerners, love can be worthwhile as long as it embodies the sweetness mutually attainable by lovers. Individuals of opposite sex in the West prefer the desirability and enjoyability of living together, in mutual love and comfort, to the constant annoyance and boredom of living as singles. They aim at maximizing enjoyment of life.

In the East, love is regarded as something inexorably desirable in itself. For, it lends an overall perspective to the human personality, while ennobling and inspiring the spirit. No wonder, love has been described as a catalyst, purifier and in similar other ways. Evidently, in all these and other attributes, one can hardly discern any implicit suggestion to the effect that love is no more than an introduction to the sweet union that usually follows it, or to mere feelings of enjoying living together in body and spirit.

Even to some impressionable Easterners, love between prospective spouses may signify something preliminary to their subsequent pleasures of union and living together only. However, even their preliminary experience of being loved by each other can (or ought to) progressively enhance their humaneness. This is not like its becoming something merely conducive to any anticipation of enjoyments from conjugal relations or cohabitation.

In either case, if love is construed as a real introduction to union of man and woman, in terms of becoming one in body and spirit, this is all the more conducive to the wholesomeness of human achievement.

In short, in love, as in several other matters, Westerners and Easterners differ in their intellectual. approach. A typical Westerner is often unable to nurture love within any abstract framework that goes beyond any mechanical process of coping with problems of routine living. Eventually, he comes round to distinguishing love from lust, and also to believing in empathy and spiritual harmony, which it is capable of breeding.

Otherwise, love comes to him as a handy natural talent, leading to marriage or cohabitation, according to the social requirements of living. On the other hand, a typical Easterner seeks to cherish love beyond the requirements of routine living.

Had love been sexual in origin, quality and effect, probably it would not have necessitated separate treatment in sexual ethics. Whatever was discussed earlier concerning the pros and cons of sexual ethics would have been rather sufficient. However, love's origin or, at any rate, its psychological quality and social effects can be quite safely construed as independent of the sexual instinct.

Accordingly, morals concerning nurturing of human inclination to love can be treated in a manner distinguishable from that of the sexual instinct. Gratifying the sexual instinct is not the only concomitant of love. For, sexual gratification is not enough to sustain love, which needs psychological contentment, too. Moreover, any denial of love can possibly lead to afflictions, which cannot be remedied by any animal- like gratification of the sexual instinct, assuming that the former is derived from the latter.

Bertrand Russell endorses the need for profound love as follows:

Those who have never known the deep intimacy and the intense companionship of happy mutual love have missed the best thing that life has to give; unconsciously, if not consciously,

they feel this and the resulting disappointment inclines them towards envy, oppression and cruelty.[2]

Sometimes, it is claimed that religion is love's enemy. The usual reasoning behind the claim is based on a situation, where a religion fails to distinguish between love and lust. Thus, the wickedness of lust is ascribed to love, as well. The allegation is not true in the case of Islam.

Yet, it can be relevant to Christianity. Islam does not treat sexual passion as wicked in itself, not to speak of considering its direct or indirect association with love as something bad or undesirable.

Deeply sincere and mutual love between spouses is highly respected in Islam. Islamic teachings commend realization of love on a sound and lasting basis.

In the general context of religion versus love, there is one point that is often overlooked. This concerns the tendency for mutual opposition between human intellect and love. Some moralists have wrongly overlooked this in indiscriminately excluding love from morality. They only regarded love as blind and capable of overruling the intellect. They believed that love is not amenable to reason, inferring wrongly that it is also least susceptible to conventional and legal, or moral, disciplining. In other words, they saw nothing but anarchic exuberance and rebelliousness in love.

Accordingly, religions or social systems, which based their morality on intellectual considerations alone, were not conducive to any salutary treatment of love. They treated love as something beyond the scope of any recommendation or advice. This is notwithstanding the fact that what is deserving of advice in matters of love can well concern one's modality of response to any casual manifestation of love in extenuating circumstances over which one is supposed to have no control. This is in order to maximize the sublime and beneficial effects of love, while remaining immune to its harmful consequences, if any.

In the above context, the main question that arises concerns the mutually inclusive relationship of love and chastity. One may ask whether or not love can, in its most positive sense, flourish in any permissive social environments. Or, is it simply a question of whether or not love's meaningfulness is invariably linked with any social preference for chastity, envisaging a certain prosaic status for women?

In his book: *The Pleasures of Philosophy, Will* Durant acknowledged that love was generally agreed to be the most fascinating thing in the course of human life. At the same time, he noted with surprise that very rarely attention was focused on the origin and growth of love, in the relevant multilingual, poetic and philosophical works of most sensational poets and writers on the subject of love.

Will Durant further pointed out that the analytical part of literary and scientific material concerning love was extremely limited. Typical coverage ranged from the ordinary reproduction of protozoa to the self-sacrificing spirit of Dante, or the poetic ecstacies of Petrarch among similar others. In all these efforts, any thorough investigation of the astonishing factuality, the natural origin, the factors in wholesome evolutionary growth and similar other aspects of love were found by him to be missing.

Earlier herein, we have identified three distinct schools of ancient arid. Modern thought concerning the origin and purpose of love, so as to deduce its unique or two- sided interaction with the sexual instinct. We have noted that love, as conceived in the West and the East both, is distinct from lust. Also, it is universally recognised as praiseworthy and respectable, although the relevant conceptualizations differ, as already explained. What remains to be examined now is mainly the question of love in relation to chastity, specially in order to specify the areas and conditions in which they can flourish.

With regard to love and chastity, the relevant social regulations can be either explicit or implicit in moral terms. Where these are explicitly regulated, women may be assigned an elevated position in society, so that they are ordinarily not approachable by men. In the other situation, where love and chastity are implicitly promoted; but not regulated, women's position is subject to the utter tedium of placing themselves at the disposal and protection of their men. One may wonder as to which one of these two sets of conditions are apt to enhance love and chastity.

Incidentally, it is notable that the so-called open or permissive societies are *ipso facto* incapable of promoting conditions for any deep and intense love relationships. Their conditions lead to waywardness and wantonness, in the process of seeking transient affairs, if not while indulging in momentary and lustful pleasures. No wonder, women's position in these so called free environments continues to be rather prosaic, while both men and women remain liable to miss heartfelt and genuine mutual love and responsiveness.

Permissive social environments further sensuality and licentiousness. They are not conducive to beneficial love held in esteem by philosophers and sociologists, in terms of its intensely evolved, deeply responsive and unselfish effects. Given appropriate social conditions, love can indeed enable personalities mellowed by it to concentrate individual energies for good purposes, render their perceptions clear and keen, induce empathy towards the beloved, as well as promote genius- like originality and excellence of thoughts and achievements.

Genuine love's wholesome qualities have been commended not only by the ancients, but the modern writers, including some who favoured the proposed new sexual freedom. In his magnum opus: History of Civilization, Will Durant mentioned about both male homosexual connotation of the traditional Greek depiction of love in their ballads and the heterosexual love episodes of the Thousand and One Night fame, dating back to centuries earlier than those of the Middle Ages. He indicated that interest in the oriental stories of natural love grew to an extent more than that in the routine. Exhortations of the Church towards promoting chastity and virtue.

Furthermore, Will Durant regarded a literary compilation, such as the Thousand and One Night, as a possible source of inspiration for the subsequent lyrical compositions abroad. He referred to one usually sarcastic contemporary Western writer's extraordinary remark to the effect that love meant the same to human carnality as life signified to human spirituality.

Indeed, as observed by Will Durant, many began to wonder how the abstraction of human sensuality into the most sensible love can be explained. People became curious about the intellectual and similar other factors that transform an animal- like instinctive hunger, such as evidenced at times by human concupiscence, into serene and tender love. The curiosity revolved around the point as to how the carnal passion might become the spiritual compassion.

Will Durant further probed into any introspective sublimation of carnal desires and the consequent platonic imaginings about a beloved in various intellectual contexts. He raised a question as to whether or not the aforesaid sublimation was the conspicuous outcome of the growth of civilization, involving progressively late marriages!

He apparently believed that an answer to the question he posed might lie in a human tendency. He pointed out that whatever one sought and did not find could become dear and extraordinarily valuable. Thus, appreciation of beauty could vary with the intensity of desire. And, desire would tend to intensify when inhibited and to diminish when satisfied.

Will Durant referred to William James contention that female modesty was riot instinctive, but inculcated by successive generations of women, out of fear that any behaviour to the contrary would attract undesirable interest or contempt of others. He pointed out that shameless women could not be of any sustained interest to men. Only women who refrained from any exuberant gaiety and who abstained from either inviting or conceding male attention were best oriented to attracting men.

According to Will Durant, any exposure of the intimate parts of the human body, from their normal state of concealment, might not evoke more than casual interest on the part of viewers. In any case, it would seldom lead to any instant arousal of carnal desire. For, even young men would prefer modesty in young women. In doing so, they might not necessarily comprehend that the delicateness of female reserve could be indicative of a high degree of tactful reaction, as well as tenderness.

Furthermore, modesty in women might be capable of endearing them to men and awakening mutual love, in anticipation of any subsequent consummation. Thus, men could be prompted to enhance their capabilities and resolution towards significant achievements, by drawing on their otherwise dormant life- oriented energies.

At the same time, Will Durant mentioned the fact that modern young women would seem to be only too willing to discard conventional morality, as if it were some old clothes that went out of fashion. He observed that these women could be audacious not only in displaying themselves, but in their sartorial tastes. Consequently, diminished masculine imaginability concerning female appeal was specified by him to be the only adverse effect of the radical change in the women's outlook and behaviour. He opined that, had it not been for men's residual imaginability, perhaps there would have remained no visualization of female beauty.

As for Bertrand Russell's romantic love, we may quote his own words as follows:

"The essential of romantic love is that it regards the beloved object as very difficult to possess and as very precious . ... The belief in the immense value of the lady is a psychological effect of the difficulty of obtaining her, and 1 think it may be laid down that when a man has no difficulty in obtaining a woman, his feeling towards her does not take the form of romantic love." [3]

Then, Bertrand Russell says:

"From the point of view of the arts, it is certainly regrettable when women are too accessible; what is most to be desired is that they should be difficult but not impossible of access . ... In a

state of complete freedom, on the other hand, a man capable of great love poetry is likely to have so much success through his charm that he will seldom have need of his best imaginative efforts in order to achieve a conquest." [4]

Furthermore, he mentions in another context as follows:-

"Among modern emancipated people, love in the serious sense with which we are concerned is suffering a new danger. When people no longer feel any moral barrier against sexual intercourse on every occasion when even a trivial impulse inclines to it, they get into the habit of dissociating sex from serious emotion and from feelings of affection; they may even come to associate it with feelings of hatred." [5]

Notes:

1- Will Durant, *The Pleasures of Philosophy*, Simon and Schuster, Inc, New York

2- Bertrand Russell: *Marriage and Morals*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. Paperbacks Ed. 1976, p. 84

3- *Ibid,* p. 49

4- *Ibid*, p. 53-54

5- *Ibid*, p. 38

Chapter 7

Concluding Remarks

Strange that Bertrand Russell deemed it fit to emphasize the need for love in the serious sense almost in a moralist vein! His proposed new sexual freedom has not been fully clarified. For, he adjudged chastity and virtue to be dispensable for all sexual purposes. He construed marriage to be in no way obstructive to free sexual love. He implicitly recommended free sexual relations even with persons other than legal spouses, provided legitimacy of *conception is* ensured. In short, he approved of all kinds of *non - violent* and harmless sexual relations. All these he advocated seemingly because he found no reason to uphold *conventional sexual* morality, except for comparing and coordinating one's. private and public interests.

With his extreme thinking, as indicated above, Bertrand Russell could not have been expected to project any correct image of morals, which would seek to regulate human sexuality, in order to nurture it on the basis of tender feelings of love and affection. In any case, it is very clear that Bertrand Russell and others like him have sought to introduce a kind of communal sexuality. Societies where free sexual love prevails can hardly promote any genuine love.

At any rate, in the permissive societies, *love* would not come to mean the same as interpreted by philosophers of old. We may recall that love has been represented as the zenith of one's life and of one's enthusiasm for living a teacher, trainer, inspirer and a catalyst. In fact, people who spend their entire lives without the benefit of love remain unfortunate enough not to deserve to be human.

In the above context, two essential points are notable. The first one concerns the position that love, from the points of view of quality and purpose, is distinct from animal concupiscence and sexual lust. Moreover, it belongs to the realm of spirituality, which aspect is incompatible with the principles of materialism. Yet, it is accept able for one who ponders over spiritual matters even in what would appear to be a materialistic perspective. This much is admitted by Bertrand Russell himself when he says that "love is something far more than desire for sexual intercourse" [1]

Furthermore, Bertrand Russell recognizes love and (ironically enough) sexual morality when he says:

Love has its own proper ideals and its own intrinsic moral standards. These are obscure both in Christian teaching and in the indiscriminate revolt against all sexual morality which has sprung up among considerable sections of the young generations. [2]

The second point elaborates on the spiritual aspect of love. Spirituality of love is evidenced in two stages. At the outset, it is indicated by a state of love in which emotional restiveness and *intensity* develops in the absence of the beloved. Subsequently, it manifests itself in sustained agitation of individual spirit. This leads to intellectual concentration and to prevalence of chastity and virtue in the spirit of the lover, so that occasionally geniuses are produced. In either case, human spirit undergoes great changes.

However the aforementioned great transformations of human spirit are possible only in a situation where lovers remain separated and/or their love remains unrequited. No sublime

achievements are likely in a situation where lovers do not miss each other. At any rate, in the latter case, even passionate love may not reach the very height of its intensity of which it is intrinsically capable, towards achieving the significant qualities noted by philosophers.

A person becomes capable of manifesting great love from within himself or herself. Then, the spirit becomes agitated and seeks rest in the person or in the image of the beloved.

The image may be construed even beyond its real counterpart. Thus, eventually, the former assumes greater significance to its accustomed lover than that of the real person of the distant beloved.

Where lovers remain united, mutual affection and kindness, as well as sincerity and repose, may be evidenced by them. A soundly endeavouring married couple will take the vicissitudes of life in their stride. Their combined abilities to do so can well be enhanced by their spiritual or intellectual compatibility, too. At the same time, they should be able to keep up their moral integrity, if their society is corrupt and polluted. In other words, They should not be tempted by any prospects of free sexual love offered by their society.

Spouses who are able to continually uphold chastity and virtue do so primarily by confining their sexual enjoyments to their conjugal rights. Then in old age when sexual passions subside, they can keep up their mutual affection through carefully nurtured and established chaste and virtuous companionship. Couples bound by sexual interests alone cannot be expected to evolve a well-integrated family living pattern and a lasting companionship.

A wife's entitlement to alimony and to practically sharing her husband's wealth represent the most significant economic and financial provisions instituted for marriage and family living. These are in consideration of the exclusiveness of the spouses' conjugal relationship. The genuine interaction between a couple, which is anticipated in marriage and family living, is envisaged in terms of their individual and collective endeavours as well as in the broader context of appropriately maintaining their social environment.

Mutual affection and sincerity, as well as humane compassion and tenderness, are highly desirable attributes in married couples, in the context of their mutual and social interactions. These are often in evidence in societies governed by Islamic moral and legal checks and balances. In the others, such as those in the West, these qualities are seldom noticeable.

In the case of separated lovers, the afflicted individual spirits are likely to become all the more sensitive and piognant. They soar and delve, as well as keep attracting and getting attracted. In the other case of united lovers, who evidence mutually affectionate enjoyment and deep sincerity, their marital union itself will be capable of producing significant attainments. One may be rather skeptical about the former.

However, with regard to the latter, one is more likely to agree.

The Divine creation of the female counterpart of man emphasized their companionship and mutual affection. This is made clear in the Glorious Qur'an, as follows:

ومن آياته ان خلق لكم من انفسكم ازواجاً
لتسكنوا اليها وجعل بينكم مودة و رحمةً

The above passage contains two keywords, which are indicative of the Divine intention in creating the human pair. These keywords are: (meaning cordiality of love and graciousness). Their significance is very clear that God not merely created woman as mate for man, but indicated also that the pairing had envisaged inculcation of the abovementioned humane qualities.

Needless to add that the above humane qualities are indeed far different from those of human sensuality, or libido, as interpreted by some modernistic societies.

Mowlavi (Rumi as popularly known in the West) reflected the above point in his stanza mentioned below:

The World owes to God its loveliness,
That which He forms retains its exquisiteness,
Since He made it as Man's abode,
How Adam's love for Eve can erode?
That is how it is with Mankind
Humane love is ordained not for animal-kind
For, pure love and compassion are to Mankind
What aggravation and lust are to animal-kind

زین للناس حق آراسته است
زآنچه حق آراست کی تا ندرست
چون پی یسکن الیهاش آفرید
کی تواند آدم از حوا برید
آنچنین خاصیتی در آدمی است
مهر، حیوان را کم است، آن از کمی است
مهر و رقت وصف انسانی بود
خشم و شهوت وصف حیوانی بود

According to Will Durant, love attains perfection when it is sustained through old age. Then, it will provide cushioning effect during the loneliness of senility and approaching death. His view confirms the fact that love extends far beyond libido, in that anyone relying on the latter does so in vain and rather superficially on the basis of the sexual instinct alone.

In fact, Will Durant believed that the spirit of love could survive beyond the last trace of human physiological fitness. In senility, loving hearts retain their fresh spiritual excellence. while emotional needs of the body are perfectly fulfilled on a continuing basis.

To sum up, love assumes significance when its intrinsically humane qualities are nurtured and evidenced. Any separation of lovers accentuates, rather than falsifies, this position Full blossoming of love is attained with chastity and rectitude on the part of lovers.

Genuine love is unlikely to flourish in sexually and secularly permissive societies. They do not provide the necessary conditions for promoting the same, even in any romantic or poetic contexts. An average married couple in modernistic societies lacks an overall perspective, such as that of Islam, so that they remain unable to attain a deeply unifying and sincere love relationship.

Notes:

1- *Ibid*, p. 83

2- *Ibid*, p. 86-87